

OUT OF REACH

He wants one more shot of vodka, but he's resting easy, reading a Hillerman mystery & may not need it. He puts book down. From front room he hears a tv voice describe another murder, then the disappearance of a four-year-old girl. One more drink will put him out of reach he thinks. It's pain (or is it fear?) that pushes him to his feet.

A PRAYER

When I was 14 I wanted to be a prize fighter. I was about five foot four & weighed 98 pounds. I was really just scared & prayed every night to that vast benevolent consciousness I hoped was out there to hurry my growth to six feet & 180 pounds. Then I'd be able to handle anything. I boxed in high school & had one amateur bout which I lost by split decision. But I did grow to six feet, & today I'm nine pounds over 180.